

SITE SURVEY REPORT

N.C. Natural Heritage Program
P.O. Box 27687 / Raleigh NC 27611

Date: 23 May 1994
Quad Name: Sylva South-Tuckasegee
Jackson County
Province: Blue Ridge

Name of Site: Tuckasegee River - East (Dicks Gap to Cedar Cliffs)

Surveyors: J. Dan Pittillo

Location & Directions: From Dicks Gap bridge on Old Cullowhee Road (SR 1002) upstream to Tuckasegee, NC and along the east fork to Cedar Cliff Lake.

Size: 8 acres.

Watershed: Tuckasegee River/Little Tennessee River.

Owners and address: Private in portions (some deeds call for the bank of the river and others to the center of the stream).

Status: Unprotected except for the state watershed protection act.

Owners contacted & Attitude: Not contacted.

General Landscape Description: This section of the Tuckasegee River follows the upper portion of the river after it leaves the upstream gorges and enters the Tuckasegee River valley. The river passes through some shoals and sandy bottomed pool areas but does not include any falls.

Physical Description:

Aspect: Generally northwestern.

Slope: 1-5°

Topog. Position: Alluvial.

Hydrology: Riverine.

Moisture: Inundated.

Elevation: 2200-2100 feet.

Geology: Max Patch Granite, Cranberry Gneiss (pCg): Biotite augen gneiss, gneissic granite and quartz monzonite, minor paragneiss and migmatite.

Biotite schist and gneiss (pCgc; locally called granite): Biotite-quartz-plagioclase gneiss and schist, commonly characterized by porphyroblasts of muscovite, microcline, garnet, or kyanite; locally contains sillimanite, graphite, or hornblende; commonly thin interlayered with micaceous quartz-feldspar gneiss (metasandstone); less commonly interlayered with amphibolite and hornblende schist).

Muscovite schist and gneiss (pCms): Mica-quartz-plagioclase schist generally interlayered with gneissic micaceous metasandstone; schist locally graphitic and sulfidic, commonly garnetiferous and/or sillimanite bearing; locally contains hornblende-garnet granofels (Hadley and Nelson, 1971).

Soils: Not applicable.

Comments on Physical Description: The Tuckasegee River in this area is a clear water stream with fluctuating water levels based on the hydroelectric generation releases from the Cedar Cliff and Thorpe power houses. Often the stream is relatively low during dry weather with only Caney Fork Creek supplying the main portion of the flow. During flooding periods, however, the river may become silt-laden, as the main source in the Caney Fork valley. However, even during these periods, the amount of silt is relatively low compared to the river downstream of Cullowhee Creek.

Biological Description: Vegetation in the river is limited to algae, mosses, and riverweed. Riverweed (*Podostemum ceratophyllum*) is quite extensive in portions of the rocky bottomed and boulder-strewn portions of the river. At times of low water, the rocks may appear to be covered with a thin layer of grass, but this condition has become depleted by the more frequent low-water levels in recent years.